



House Federal and State Affairs Committee
Chair, Rep. John Barker
Hearing: January 15, 2021

Position – OPPOSE HCR 5003

Chair Barker, and Members of the Committee,

The Mainstream Coalition opposes HCR 5003, addressing abortion in response to the Kansas Supreme Court's decision in *Hodes & Nauser, MDs, P.A. v. Schmidt*.

The Mainstream Coalition was founded 28 years ago by a sitting Republican State Representative, a sitting Democratic State Representative, and two active members of the clergy, among others. Our Board and membership are bipartisan, and our organization is nonpartisan. Our membership is strongest in Northeast Kansas, but we have members across the state. The concerns we bring are shared by these Kansans, from a range of political identities.

Our organization was founded on the issue of the separation of church and state. In almost all cases, objections to abortion rights come from a place of faith. We applaud people of strong religious belief, religious leaders were among our own founders. But they, and we, do not believe the morality of one person's faith should be imposed on another person. That is the foundation of the separation of church and state, and how we best protect religious freedom for everyone, regardless of faith or lack thereof.

We affirm that women have a right to access healthcare without discrimination and have always supported a woman's right to make her own decisions about her reproductive health. This amendment would take that right away from every Kansas woman, and put the decision in the hands of legislators. These intensely personal decisions are made by women in consultation with their faith, family and physician, not by legislators far removed from the circumstances.

We support data-driven efforts to reduce abortion rates, and ask legislators to instead support expanded access to health care, science-based health education, more funding for public schools, higher wages, family leave, and any number of other policies that have been proven to reduce the rate of unplanned pregnancies. We can protect both women and children in this way, together.

In a state that values individual freedoms so strongly, the decisions between a woman and her loved ones about her reproductive health should not be intruded upon by the state.

Founded in 1993, the Mainstream Coalition is a nonpartisan nonprofit that advocates for common sense public policy in Kansas. Our members do more than vote.

We urge the committee to reject HCR 5003.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Poppa", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Poppa
Executive Director of the Mainstream Coalition